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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/708,975	11/07/2000	JP Leon	06969025510	3206

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EXAMINER

WOO, RICHARD SUKYOON

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3629

DATE MAILED: 11/30/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/708,975	LEON, JP	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Richard Woo	3629	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 25 August 2004.
 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-17 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-17 is/are rejected.
 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

- 1) The amendment filed August 25, 2004 has been entered.

Response to Arguments

- 2) Applicant's arguments filed August 25, 2004 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant's argument that Kara does not disclose or suggest the concept of performing a customer-relation-management function based on an identifier code of medium is respectfully traversed.

Kara discloses the invention including the step of performing the CRM function, which is depicted as "... the purchaser transmits the unique data pertaining to the STOCK material to the seller..." and "... by the data base keeping track of the user's use of the STOCK and sending the next number in a sequence" (see Col. 8, lines 30-44). Keeping track of the user's use of the stock and associating the unique data with the specific stock material are deemed to be closely related to CRM function as claimed by the applicant.

- 3) The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

Claim Objections

- 4) Claims 13-16 are objected to because of the following informalities:

In Claim 13, line 11, "and" should be deleted.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

- 5) Claims 2-4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In Claim 2, line 3, the recitation of "the first task" lacks antecedent basis.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

- 6) Claims 1-9, 13-14 and 16-17, as far as Claims 2-4 are definite, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Kara (US 6,505,179).

W.R.T. Claim1:

Kara discloses a method comprising:

receiving from a user via the communication network an identifier code of a medium to be used to purchase a value stamp, the medium being suitable for printing a value indicium thereon, the identifier code identifying the medium;

accessing a database using the identifier code received from the user (see Figs. 3-6; col. 2, line 45 – col. 3, line 16), the database including a first and second identifier codes that are associated with first and second customer-relation-management (CRM) information, respectively (see Supra Response to Argument);

performing a specific action according to a result of the accessing step, wherein a first action (such as keep track of the user's stock as recited supra Response to Argument) associated with the first CRM information is performed if the identifier code received from the user corresponds to the first identifier code stored in the database and a second action (such as sending the next number in sequence, see Supra Response to Argument) associated with the second CRM information is performed if the identifier code received from the user corresponds to the second identifier code stored in the database; and

causing the value indicium to be printed on the medium to generate a value stamp (see Figs. 2, 8A-D, for example).

W.R.T. Claim 2: Kara further discloses the method, wherein the first CRM information indicates that the medium is a medium that has been purchased by the user, the first action involving charging the cost of the medium to the user (see Col. 8, lines 45-64).

W.R.T. Claim 3: Kara further discloses the method, wherein the medium is a postage label sheet having a plurality of labels (see Supra Claim 1);

W.R.T. Claim 4: Kara further discloses the method, wherein a plurality of value indicia are printed on the labels (see Supra);

W.R.T. Claim 5: Kara further discloses the method, wherein the first action involves determining whether an affiliate of a service provider requires an additional supply of the medium by examining the identifier code, wherein the affiliate is the user or a provider of the medium to the user, and wherein the service provider is an agent authorized to

provide the value stamp to the user (see Figs. 3-6 and the descriptions thereof; col. 2, line 45 – col. 3, line 16);

W.R.T. Claim 6: Kara further discloses the method including the steps of:

- generating CRM information at least for the identifier code of the medium;
- storing the generated CRM information in a database system, wherein the database system includes CRM information corresponding to a plurality of media; and
- retrieving the CRM information corresponding to the identifier code received from the user, wherein the retrieved CRM information is used to determine whether the affiliate requires the additional supply of the medium (see Supra Response to Argument and Claim 1);

W.R.T. Claim 7: Kara further discloses the method, wherein the value indicium is a postage indicium (see Supra);

W.R.T. Claim 8: Kara further discloses the method, wherein the identifier code is a label serial number or a sheet serial number (see Fig. 1 for example);

W.R.T. Claim 9: Kara further discloses the method, wherein the identifier code enables one group of media to be differentiated from another group (see Figs. 1, 3-6; col. 2, line 45 – col. 3, line 16);

W.R.T. Claim 13:

Kara discloses a method comprising:

- generating CRM information corresponding to an identifier code of a medium to be distributed to a user, the medium being suitable for printing a value indicium thereon

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to produce a value stamp, the identifier code being suitable for distinguishing the medium from at least one other medium (see Figs. 1, 3-6; col. 2, line 45 – col. 3, line 16);

storing the generated CRM information in a database system, wherein the database system includes CRM information corresponding to a plurality of media;

providing the medium to a user having access to a data processing system;

receiving from the user over the network the identifier code of the medium to be used to purchase a value stamp;

retrieving the CRM information corresponding to the code (see Supra); and

performing a task associated with the CRM information (see Supra Response to Argument and Claim 1).

W.R.T. Claim 14: Kara further discloses the method including the step of: determining whether an affiliate of a service provider requires an additional supply of the medium by examining the identifier code, wherein the affiliate is the user or a provider of the medium to the user, and wherein the service provider is an agent authorized to provide the value stamp to the user (see Figs. 1, 3-6; col. 2, line 45 – col. 3, line 16); and

W.R.T. Claim 16: Kara further discloses the method, wherein the code is additionally used as a security feature of the medium (see Id.).

W.R.T. Claim 17:

Kara discloses a method comprising the steps of:

generating CRM information corresponding to a serial number of a medium to be distributed to a user, the medium being suitable for printing a value indicium thereon, the serial number uniquely identifying the medium (see Figs. 1, 3-6; col. 2, line 45 – col. 3, line 16);

storing the generated CRM information in a database system, wherein the database system includes CRM information corresponding to a plurality of media;

providing the medium to a user having access to a data processing system (see Id.);

receiving from the user over the network the serial number of the medium to be used to purchase a value stamp; and

determining whether an affiliate of a service provider requires an additional supply of the medium by examining the identifier code, wherein the affiliate is the user or a provider of the medium to the user, and wherein the service provider is an agent authorized to provide the value stamp to the user (see Supra Response to Argument and Claim 1).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

7) Claims 10-12 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kara.

Kara discloses the invention as cited above but does not expressly disclose the limitations in Claims 10-12 and 15.

At the time the invention was made, it would have been an obvious matter of design choice to a person of ordinary skill in the art to offer a free sample to users (for the purpose of marketing); require the user to restock the medium; require the user to purchase the medium or commit to purchasing a medium before allowing the user to use the medium to purchase the value stamp if not purchased previously because Applicant has not disclosed that require the user the purchase the medium provides an advantage, is used for a particular purpose, or solves a stated problem. One of ordinary skill in the art, furthermore, would have expected Applicant's invention to perform equally well with the invention of Kara because Kara is related to electronic commerce in general and in particular to a system and method for establishing the authenticity of a past electronic communication at the point of the consummation of the commercial endeavor which is the subject of the electronic communications.

Therefore, it would have been an obvious matter of design choice to modify the invention of Kara to obtain the invention as specified in claims.

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within

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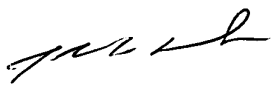
TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Richard Woo whose telephone number is 703-308-7830. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 8:30 AM -5:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Weiss can be reached on 703-308-2702. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


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November 27, 2004


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